

House Joint Resolution No. 10  
February 5, 2009  
Presented by Ken McDonald  
House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee

EXHIBIT 12  
DATE 2/5/09  
HB HJ 10

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Ken McDonald, Wildlife Division Administrator of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

FWP stands in support of HJ 10. Numerous models indicate that Montana's climate is getting and will continue to get warmer. Models are less certain about precipitation - we could see more or less precipitation, but it is likely the precipitation will be more in the form of rain vs. snow, and that runoff will be sooner and faster. These likely temperature and precipitation changes have potential to significantly affect Montana's fish and wildlife resources - both game and nongame. We have seen examples of this already with warm fall weather limiting elk harvest and necessitating extended seasons, hot summer temperatures necessitating fishing closures, and earlier and extended fire seasons. Other potential impacts include reduction in sage brush habitat, expansion of exotic cheat grass, warmer water temperatures in our streams and rivers, and a continuing epidemic of pine beetles affecting our forests.

While we cannot stop the predicted change in climate, it is important that we attempt to anticipate potential impacts, monitor plants and animals to detect rates and intensity of change, and take necessary actions to moderate those where possible. This unprecedented assault on Montana's wildlife and their habitats will require unprecedented diligence. As HJ 10 states, planning and implementation of conservation strategies in response to predicted climate change will require long-term and sustained funding. This funding shouldn't come just from hunter and angler license dollars. Montana FWP encourages passage of HJ 10 supporting establishment of new revenue streams to support planning, monitoring potential impacts of climate change, and implementing conservation measures in response to predicted and observed impacts to Montana's wildlife and wildlife habitat. Opportunities for such funding stream include a surcharge on carbon cap-and-trade programs or carbon tax legislation.

FWP urges support and passage of HJ10.